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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A game and messenger client server system, comprising:

a plurality of game clients;

a game server including logic to operate a multiplayer game using inputs from and outputs to an active game set of game clients including the plurality of game clients, wherein game clients other than those in the active game set can join an active game by supplying the game server with a reference to the active game;

a plurality of messenger clients;

a messenger server including logic to forward messages from a sender messenger client to a receiving messenger client;

logic to couple a game client to a messenger client to allow the game client to send the messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, whereby a message sent by the messenger client includes the data used to initiate joining a game; and

logic to initiate a join of a game at an invitee client, using data received in a message to the invitee.

2-7. (canceled)

8. (original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 1, further comprising an icon that indicates a state of an inviter client.

9. (original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 8, wherein the icon is a game-specific icon.

10. (original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 1, further comprising logic to generate a data file sent in response to a request from the invitee client.

11-16. (canceled)

17. (original) A method of operating a multi-player game having a plurality of game clients and a plurality of messenger clients, the plurality of game clients and plurality of messenger clients in communication with a game server and a messenger server, the method comprising:

joining the game by sending a reference to the game to the game server;

sending, from an inviter game client to an inviter messenger client, data used to initiate joining the game;

sending a message including the data used to initiate joining the game to the messenger server;

routing the message to an invitee messenger client; and

using the data in the routed message to invoke a game client and join the game.

18. (original) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending, from the game server to the inviter game client, a reference used to join the game.

19. (previously amended) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending the message to a list of messenger clients associated with the inviter messenger client,

wherein an updated state is perceptible by a user of the invitee messenger client.

20. (original) The method of claim 17, further comprising updating a state of an icon associated with the inviter messenger client in response to receiving the message.

21-22. (canceled)

23. (original) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending a request for a game data file to the game server.

24. (original) The method of claim 23, wherein the game data file includes a reference to the game locally.

25-27. (canceled)

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28. (previously presented) A method of operating a multi-player game having an inviter client, an invitee client, and a server, the method comprising:

invoking an inviter game client at the inviter client;

connecting the inviter game client to the game by sending a reference to the game to the server;

creating a message at the inviter client containing data used for invoking an invitee game client and for joining the game;

routing the message to the invitee client; and

using the data in the message to invoke the invitee game client and join the game.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein creating the message ~~comprising~~ comprises creating the message at the inviter client.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~29~~ 28, wherein routing the message is by using TCP/IP.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 28, wherein creating the message ~~comprising~~ comprises creating the message at the server.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~31~~ 28, further comprising sending the message to a second server.

33. (original) A game and messenger client server system, comprising:

a plurality of game clients including an inviter and an invitee game client;

a plurality of messenger clients including an inviter and invitee messenger client;

a server including logic to operate a multiplayer game using inputs from and outputs to an active game set of game clients of the plurality of game clients, wherein game clients other than those in the active game set can join an active game by supplying the server with a reference to the active game;

logic to couple the inviter game client to the inviter messenger client to allow the inviter game client to send the inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game,

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whereby a message sent by the inviter messenger client includes the data used to initiate joining a game; and

logic to initiate a join of a game at the invitee game client, using data received in a message to the invitee messenger client,

wherein the inviter messenger client includes logic to forward messages to the invitee messenger client.

34. (canceled)

35. (original) A method for providing a multi user networked computing environment, the method using an activity server and a messenger server, where the activity server and the messenger server are configured to communicate with a plurality of user computer systems, the user computer system including an activity client where the user computer system executes a user interface operated by a human user and is further configured to engage an activity using the activity client, wherein the user interface includes a display device and a user input device, wherein the user computer system is coupled to a network for exchanging information with the activity server and the messenger server, the method comprising:

accepting signals from the user input device to engage the activity using the activity client;

presenting one or more preferences to the user computer system, where the one or more preferences are associated with activities;

selecting at least one preference to join the activity;

invoking the selected activity with a messenger client;

providing to the messenger server a user state and a reference to the activity in which the user is participating; and

presenting to another user associated with at least one of the plurality of user computer systems the user state and the reference to the activity.

36. (original) The method of claim 35 further comprising:

selecting to join the user in the activity by the another user;

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invoking another activity client, where the another activity client is associated with the another user; and

joining the user and the another user in a multi user activity.

37. (original) A method of claim 35, wherein the activity is a game.

38. (previously amended) A computer program designed to execute on a server having a game server and a messenger server to provide a multi player computer environment, the computer program comprising:

program code to accept signals from a user input device to engage a game using a game client;

program code to present one or more preferences to a user computer system, where the one or more preferences are associated with games;

program code to select at least one preference to join the game;

program code to invoke the selected game with a messenger client;

program code to provide to the messenger server a user state and a reference to the game in which the user is playing; and

program code to present to another user associated with at least one of a plurality of user computer systems the user state and the reference to the game.

39. (original) The computer program of claim 38, further comprising:

program code to select to join the user in the game by the another user;

program code to invoke another game client, where the another game client is associated with the another user; and

program code to join the user and the another user in a multi-game activity.

40. (new) Logic for use at an invitee client to initiate joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client for receiving in at least one message from an inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, the logic comprising:

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invocation logic for using the data to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, the inviter and invitee game clients being respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients.

41. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, wherein the data used to initiate joining a game includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

42. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for activating the invocation logic in response to action by a user.

43. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for displaying a buddy list of the invitee messenger client and an indication that the invitee game client may join an active game which a member of the buddy list is playing.

44. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for displaying a game-specific icon identifying the active game.

45. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

46. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, wherein the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a second computer system.

47. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for sending to other messenger clients at least one message including a reference to an active game.

48. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, wherein the invitee messenger client is operable to receive the at least one message via a messenger server.

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49. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic to read at least one registry entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.

50. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, wherein the invitee messenger client is operable to receive at least one message including a reference to a potential game, the logic for use at an invitee client further comprising validation logic for validating the potential game as legitimate.

51. (new) The logic for use at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game client.

52. (new) A method of operating an invitee client to initiate joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client for receiving in at least one message from an inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, the method comprising:

invoking the invitee game client using the data; and

connecting the invitee game client to the game server using the data, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, the inviter and invitee game clients being respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients.

53. (new) The method of claim 52, wherein the data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

54. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising initiating joining to the active game in response to action by a user.

55. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising displaying a buddy list of the invitee messenger client and an indication that the invitee game client may join an active game which a member of the buddy list is playing.

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56. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising displaying a game-specific icon identifying the active game.

57. (new) The method of claim 52, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

58. (new) The method of claim 52, wherein the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a second computer system.

59. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising sending to other messenger clients at least one message including a reference to an active game.

60. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising receiving the at least one message via a messenger server.

61. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising reading at least one registry entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.

62. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising receiving at least one message including a reference to a potential game, the method further comprising validating the potential game as legitimate.

63. (new) The method of claim 52, further comprising generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game client.

64. (new) A computer program product comprising program code for use at an invitee client for initiating joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client that is capable of being coupled to a network to receive messages, the computer program product comprising:

program code for invoking the invitee game client using data used to initiate joining a game, wherein the data is contained in at least one message received by the invitee

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messenger client from an inviter messenger client, and includes a reference to the game server
and a reference to the active game; and

> program code for connecting the invitee game client to the game server using the
data, wherein the inviter and invitee game clients are respectively associated with the inviter and
invitee messenger clients.

65. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the data includes
a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies
the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the
identified game server.

66. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the program code
for initiating joining to the active game is operable to initiate joining to the active game in
response to action by a user.

67. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, further comprising
program code for displaying a buddy list of the invitee messenger client and an indication that
the invitee game client may join an active game which a member of the buddy list is playing.

68. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, further comprising
program code for displaying a game-specific icon identifying the active game.

69. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the invitee
messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

70. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the invitee
messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and
game clients reside at a second computer system.

71. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, further comprising
program code for sending to other messenger clients at least one message including a reference
to an active game.

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72. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein the invitee messenger client is operable to receive the at least one message via a messenger server.

73. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, further comprising program code to read at least one registry entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.

74. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, wherein invitee messenger client is operable to receive at least one message including a reference to a potential game, the computer program product further comprising program code for validating the potential game as legitimate.

75. (new) The computer program product of claim 64, further comprising program code for generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game client.

76. (new) Logic for operation at an inviter client, the inviter client including an inviter game client and an inviter messenger client for sending at least one message over a network to an invitee messenger client, the logic comprising:

logic for causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to the inviter messenger client for inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an invitee game client associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game client is joined.

77. (new) The logic of claim 76, wherein the logic for causing the data to be provided comprises a messaging interface.

78. (new) The logic of claim 76, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message via a messenger server.

79. (new) The logic of claim 76, wherein the active game may be hosted by a game server.

80. (new) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.

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81. (new) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

82. (new) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

83. (new) The logic of claim 76, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

84. (new) The logic of claim 83, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message automatically to members of the buddy list.

85. (new) The logic of claim 76, wherein the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a second computer system.

86. (new) A method for operating an inviter client, the inviter client including an inviter game client and an inviter messenger client for sending at least one message over a network to an invitee messenger client, the method comprising:
    causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to the inviter messenger client for inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an invitee game client associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game client is joined.

87. (new) The method of claim 86, wherein a messaging interface causes the data to be provided to the inviter messenger client.

88. (new) The method of claim 86, further comprising sending the at least one message from the inviter messenger client to the invitee messenger client.

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89. (new) The method of claim 86, wherein the active game may be hosted by a game server.

90. (new) The method of claim 89, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.

91. (new) The method of claim 89, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

92. (new) The method of claim 89, wherein the data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

93. (new) The method of claim 86, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

94. (new) The method of claim 93, further comprising the inviter messenger client sending the at least one message automatically to members of the buddy list.

95. (new) The method of claim 86, wherein the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a second computer system.

96. (new) A computer program product comprising program code for operation at an inviter client, the inviter client including an inviter game client and an inviter messenger client for sending at least one message over a network to an invitee messenger client, the computer program product comprising:

program code for causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to the inviter messenger client for inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an

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invitee game client associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game client is joined.

97. (new) The computer program product of claim 96, wherein the program code for causing the data to be provided to the inviter messenger client is included in a messaging interface.

98. (new) The computer program product of claim 96, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message via a messenger server.

99. (new) The computer program product of claim 96, wherein the active game may be hosted by a game server.

100. (new) The computer program product of claim 99, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.

101. (new) The computer program product of claim 99, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

102. (new) The computer program product of claim 99, wherein the data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

103. (new) The computer program product of claim 96, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

104. (new) The computer program product of claim 103, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message automatically to members of the buddy list.

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105. (new) The computer program product of claim 96, wherein the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a second computer system.